



A New Direction

Executive Summary and Recommendations
Submitted by Gov. Bob Holden's "One Missouri,
One Agriculture" Task Force
Dec. 17, 2001

December 2001

Dear Governor Holden:

I am pleased to present you with the findings and recommendations of your "One Missouri, One Agriculture" task force, which has been hard at work examining ways to improve our state's vital agricultural industry.

The insights and suggestions task force members gleaned from Missourians during a series of meetings held across the state this summer were used to develop workable solutions that will provide a new direction for Missouri agriculture in the 21st century.

I am excited about the opportunities outlined in the following pages that will allow us to find new ways to capitalize on our diverse agricultural resources to meet the needs of an ever-changing society.

Thank you for your initiative in establishing this task force and for recognizing the importance of Missouri agriculture and the citizens it sustains. I look forward to working with you to implement the recommendations that will chart the course for our future success in agriculture.

Sincerely,

Lowell Mohler
Director, Missouri Department of Agriculture

Executive Summary

Purpose:

At the direction of Missouri Governor Bob Holden, State Director of Agriculture Lowell Mohler established a group of 38 leaders from all facets of agriculture to assess the current climate of agriculture in our state and to develop an agenda for its future. Throughout the spring and summer of 2001, these leaders conferred on issues and held public input forums to develop the scope of the problems and opportunities facing Missouri agriculture. The following pages summarize the findings of the Governor's Task Force on Agriculture.

Issues:

Missouri agriculture is diverse and complex. Agriculture must be viewed as an industry, with each aspect of production and processing contributing to the success of the whole.

The scope of this complex industry is expressed by the smallest traditional family farmer raising time-tested row crops or livestock to the largest vertically integrated livestock producer-processor churning out food for the domestic and international marketplace. It is expressed in terms of the use of age-old organic production practices with little or no off-farm inputs, to the most complex farming operation planting genetically modified seeds and using global positioning satellite technology. These are the obvious examples, but agriculture is also in the laboratories of our universities and in our grain mills, textile-manufacturing facilities, processing houses and grocers' cases across the state. All of these segments are vital components that ensure the success of Missouri agriculture.

To realize this opportunity requires bold leadership, especially in light of the state's current budget situation. Too often, we find that the easy answer to a problem is to create a new spending program or a new incentive plan. Admittedly, growth and expansion of Missouri agriculture will cost money – both state and individual funds – but expanding the resources available to the agriculture community must focus first on making the most of every dollar spent and removing bureaucracy as well. The task force believes significant change in Missouri agriculture can be achieved by changing the climate of the industry. We must identify and mitigate regulations that hinder agriculture unnecessarily and reorganize bureaucracy so that it works efficiently.

The task force believes that special emphasis on key areas will yield the most results in developing a stronger and more inclusive agricultural sector. In a broad sense, the following areas highlight the changes necessary for a productive and expanding agriculture, and create the structure for the task force findings. The task force recommends:

1. **Creating a more favorable business climate for Missouri agriculture.**

Creating a business climate that promotes growth and investment in agricultural enterprises is key to the long-term health and expansion of Missouri's food and fiber production and processing sector. Changing the current environment will require investment of time, energy and resources targeted at a number of key strategic areas: the regulatory climate; economic development opportunities and coordination; transportation planning and efficient use of assets; and government structure.

2. **Developing new and expanded product and market development opportunities for Missouri agricultural products, both raw and processed.**
Investment in new, value-added products and access to markets – local, domestic, and international – are key to increasing profit and production opportunities. Linking producers with commodity buyers, identity-preserved and quality program product processors, retailers and consumers give producers additional control of the marketplace.
3. **Expanding access to capital for business creation and expansion.**
Access to funding for new production tools, methods, infrastructure, land or processing opportunities is key to the success of many farms across our state. As farmers seek to grow, become value enhancers, or pursue new opportunities, funds need to be readily available to help offset the inherent risk of these investments.
4. **Creating an organizational and communications infrastructure to better serve the needs of the ag community.**
Communications within the agriculture community as well as with the public – which is often far removed from production agriculture – is key to the long-term success of agriculture. Funding for and coordination of programs that increase agriculture awareness should be increased.

Task Force Findings and Recommendations

Introduction:

Agriculture is changing, and Missouri producers must change with it to be successful.

Missouri has always been fortunate to have a diverse and robust agriculture. Our geography offers lands suitable for production of a large variety of crops, natural resources for a high value forest product industry, and the elbow-room and feed sources for raising livestock. This diversity has helped Missourians hedge hard times in ways other states more dependent on just crop or livestock production could not. Our success, and our past, are our prologue.

The late nineties and first years of the new century have been hard for many farmers. But contrary to those hard times, the voice of Missouri agriculture, as articulated at field hearings in St. Joseph, Kirksville, Springfield, Portageville, St. Louis and Sedalia, was a voice of optimism. While concerns with changes in production and processing systems were apparent, participants indicated that changes can be made to make Missouri a friendlier and more productive place to farm. Yes, quite clearly, the face of agricultural production and processing is changing, and a myriad of factors – high cost inputs, vertical integration, and government policies to name a few – have shifted emphases on our farms. Our challenge as a state and an agricultural community will be to successfully capitalize on the changes occurring in the global marketplace.

At the same time we must investigate changing the social and economic aspects that will guide the development of new policies that are friendlier to our producers and rural communities. Missouri has historically been dependent on agriculture as its economic engine. Changes in structure, consolidation, vertical integration and the impact of international trade agreements has defined a new landscape for many farmers.

It is our duty in government to consider the social aspects of these changes to our rural communities and work toward those programs that help to keep producers profitable on their farms as we provide options for the next generation of family farmers.

Philosophy:

In choosing a theme for the Task Force, “One Missouri – One Agriculture,” Director Mohler endeavored to set the stage for the group’s findings. This slogan focuses on Missouri agriculture’s support of all types of production methods, philosophies, and marketing strategies. Moreover, it recognizes the strength inherent in Missouri’s diversity. It further recognizes that there is no one way to farm, market, or live, yet strives to refocus the debate on our common challenges in the marketplace and political system.

The vast majority of challenges facing agriculture are shared across a diverse spectrum – environmental regulations, the acceptance of technology, global markets, high input costs and low commodity prices – to name a few. By joining together as an industry to focus on areas of common concern, we can more successfully face our challenges.

Findings:

The task force’s findings have been combined into four major recommendations:

1. Create a more favorable business climate for Missouri agriculture.
2. Drive new and expanded product and market development for Missouri agricultural products, both raw and processed.
3. Expand access to capital for business creation and expansion.
4. Create an organizational and communications infrastructure to better serve the needs of the ag community.

These issues are addressed in the following paragraphs:

1. Create a more favorable business climate for Missouri farms and agribusinesses.



A Missouri farm scene.

Creating a business climate that promotes growth and investment in agricultural enterprises is key to the long-term health and expansion of Missouri’s food and fiber production and processing sector. Changing the current environment will require investment of time, energy and resources targeted at a number of key strategic areas: The regulatory climate; economic development opportunities and coordination; focus on transportation planning and efficient use of assets; and the regulatory and promotional structure of government.

Farmers have always been environmentalists. Stewardship of the land is fundamental to the tenet of agriculture which says, “take care of the land, and it will take care of you.” Over time, agricultural practices have evolved to promote long-term environmental sustainability and resource and input renewability. State environmental stewardship efforts are coordinated primarily between three agencies: the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). A consistent state policy can only be achieved through cooperation between the three agencies as equals. With high profile issues such as nutrient and waste management from animal facilities, agricultural run-off, wildlife habitat and watershed management, none of the stakeholders can afford to remove their agencies from the issues.

Secondly, addressing agriculture as a business, and therefore a player in Missouri’s economic development program is key. Missouri’s current value-added infrastructure provides a variety of opportunities for producers to try innovative ways to add value to their goods, but in many ways is still not operating at maximum efficiency due to the disparate nature of the system. Agribusiness offers access to quality programs, delivery contracts and demands for plant genetics that offer premium garnering opportunities for producers. State programs provide cost-saving opportunities for developing business systems and infrastructure. University systems, including research and outreach, offer new opportunities for efficiency and technology uses. Problems develop because these programs take place fairly independently and often without significant value-chain focus. A look at the existing value-added businesses and concepts currently operating throughout the nation can offer insight into the potential successes and failures in Missouri. The value-added movement has created a number of success stories – most of which were based on several important principles: 1. market focus; 2. sufficient capital; 3. sound business planning; and 4. strong industry-focused management. Failures are generally based upon the lack of one of the principles of success. The assets to eliminate these problems already exist within the economic development infrastructure.

Third, a transportation system that allows for free and efficient movement of agricultural products – which maximizes the potential of our natural and inherited advantages – is critical to the future success of Missouri agriculture. Transportation costs are a significant contributor to cost of production and final cost competitiveness in the marketplace. Missouri, a significant transportation hub in the commodity rich Midwest, offers agricultural producers significant opportunity for relative low cost bulk transportation. With the 7th largest interstate highway system in the nation, the two largest inland waterways bordering and crossing the state, two international airports and significant rail assets, Missouri has the opportunity to provide low-cost integrated transportation solutions for producers. Additionally, the waterways have a significant positive impact on agricultural jobs in the state due to fertilizer, chemical and commodity storage facilities in Missouri. Historically, Missouri has been a gateway state. We have the opportunity to continue to be a gateway for products (both those produced, and those merely transported through) into domestic and international markets.

Finally, the structure of government services and programs must be appropriate to both the agriculture community and the general public – both of which the department and state government work to protect.

Taking the following actions can help develop a more favorable business climate:

Regulatory Issues

- ✓ Require interdepartmental cooperation and coordination to enhance communication and develop a positive image for agriculture. To this end, the administration should formalize policies for interaction, develop targets for coordination, and remove barriers to discussion between agencies charged with writing rules and those that are affected by the rules. New or re-directed resources should be used, either at the MDA or across agencies, to coordinate this effort and provide advocacy. The governor should support creation of a formal coordinating body among the MDA, MDC, MDNR, Missouri Department of Health and others for coordinating rules that affect Missouri agriculture.
- ✓ Ensure new and existing regulations are based on sound, peer-reviewed science and reviewed by industry recognized experts; cost-benefit analyses are factored into decisions regarding environmental and conservation policies; and objective – not subjective – rules are promulgated.
- ✓ Discourage counties from adopting ordinances affecting agricultural operations that are more restrictive than state or federal rules or regulations, and require the use of sound, peer-reviewed science (with the same qualified scientists and recognized expert standard as regulations at the state level) for proposed and existing ordinances restricting agriculture at the county and local level. MDA should develop strategies to deal with this issue.

Economic Development

- ✓ Support MDA's involvement in the Missouri Business Development Network to enhance technical and business assistance to agricultural enterprises and entrepreneurs.
- ✓ Identify needs and strategic advantages throughout the entire agricultural infrastructure to develop agricultural sector opportunities. Use identified strategic advantages and benefits of existing industry to provide a road map for value-added opportunities.

"My message is that my families' operation has struggled to stay in business with no government assistance, in fact, in spite of government regulatory pressure."

-- *Kathy Chinn, independent producer*

"The greatest impediment to our growth is excessive government regulation." -- *Quint Drennan, independent producer*

"You cannot increase your operation ... you cannot add to it. You can't bring any brothers back, father-son operations back ... We had a dairy operation that wanted to possibly double; we had a county health ordinance that wanted to put a stop to it. This hodge-podge of health ordinances is going to be very detrimental to the state" -- *Jim Guest, Missouri Pork Producers Association*

"Enhancing part of the economic sector does not ensure growth and prosperity for the community or for its individuals and families ... Economic developers in the state have often discounted agriculture, especially independent family farm agriculture as a key component of the overall community development picture." -- *Anna Kleiner, MU Rural Sociology professor and Farmers Union member*

- ✓ Ensure that the administration views agriculture (the department, industry and rural communities) as a full partner in Missouri's economic development programs.

Transportation

- ✓ Encourage development and implementation of a comprehensive highway construction and maintenance plan and secure funding for the same, to include farm-to-market roads. Additionally, the administration should encourage highway and transportation plans and investments that foster development and expansion of agriculture production and agribusiness, including investments in barge, port and rail access.
- ✓ Develop measures to ensure accountability and credibility of transportation funding.
- ✓ Continue to support open navigation on Missouri's waterways and reject efforts to make changes in flow patterns.

Structure

- ✓ Structure and fund MDA in such a manner that it facilitates and enacts agriculture policy and programs focusing on traditional and alternative agriculture, recognizing the relative economic impact of each.

"I think we've got to turn this industry around with a team effort. It takes a producer, allied industry, it takes Extension, Commercial Agriculture, the state legislature, Department of Economic Development, DNR and Department of Ag." -- *Arlen Schwinke, Missouri Dairy Association*

"The issue is not whether our state's roads and bridges need to be improved. It's about developing a funding package that addresses specific needs and can generate public support." -- *Blake Hurst, Missouri Farm Bureau*

"On the Missouri River, I'll just make it very clear. If you don't have the water, you can't float boats. If you don't have the water, you can't support our environment." -- *Christopher Brescia, MARC 2000*

2. Expand investments in Missouri agricultural production and marketing opportunities.

Ultimately the market defines success or failure in every business – agricultural, industrial or service. Although the "free market" has not historically been the process by which agricultural decision-making has occurred, it has become much more of a force in production due to changes in federal policies, the advent of new technology, and the integration of the food production system.

Much of the agriculture marketing system is impacted by federal policies. Trade agreements and barriers, federal promotion and market access programs, price supports, and rules against predatory or monopolistic behavior define the game in domestic and international marketing.

The concentration of the food system also has an impact on marketing. At the farm level, outlets for sales of commodity products have become centralized or disappeared. Without access to multiple sale points,

producers are denied the ability to “market” and become mere deliverers of product – forcing them to be price takers. Without differentiation in product or competitive buying, commodity farmers have been without a way to beat the depressed prices of grains and animals.

Additionally, we must focus on the markets of tomorrow. The life sciences have always been a part of agriculture. In the future they will continue to provide advances that increase productivity, offer new uses for plants and animals, and provide new opportunities for producers to grow and prosper. In Missouri, an effort is under way to enhance an existing research and business cluster in plant and animal science and pharmaceutical research and production. The current administration has committed to using state resources to incubate and foster growth. Business and research institutions are focusing on areas of specialization and building on core competencies. Agriculture must develop a game plan to expand the life sciences infrastructure if it is to maximize its opportunities.



Producers prepare for business at an AgriMissouri farmers' market.

Investment in new, value-added products and access to markets – local, domestic, and international – are key to increasing profit and production opportunities. Linking producers with commodity buyers, identity-preserved grain processors, retailers and consumers allows producers additional control of the marketplace.

Market opportunities can be expanded through the following efforts:

- ✓ Launch a comprehensive “Buy Missouri” campaign, partnering with commodity organizations to include: farm-to-school programs; farmers’ markets; farmer/chef cooperatives or cooperation; and media promotions.
- ✓ Encourage legislation requiring state institutions (schools, colleges, prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, nutrition sites, military, etc.) to buy Missouri grown food when available. Also, require state buildings with food service to buy Missouri products.
- ✓ Initiate an incentive – either financial or promotional – to encourage private businesses to purchase Missouri agricultural products.

“We need the state to insist that state institutions and state assisted entities use Missouri value-added products, such as canned beef, pork products, ethanol and soy-diesel. Missouri should require all gasoline sold to be a blend of at least 10 percent ethanol, much like Iowa requires. The same should be done with soy-diesel.” -- **Ronald Blaue, Blaue Agri-Farms, Inc.**

- ✓ Develop and support a comprehensive infrastructure for marketing and distributing Missouri agricultural products.
 1. Increase financial support for farmers' markets, organic and other specialty products, community food systems, and other Missouri agriculture ventures;
 2. Increase financial support for the state's meat inspection program;
 3. Develop standards, certification, and identifiable branding for Missouri agricultural products;
 4. Develop a price discovery and reporting system for Missouri's forest crops; and
 5. Enhance opportunities for production agriculture by providing the same incentives available to other industries.
- ✓ Designate state funds, such as tobacco settlement funds or general revenue funds, to support basic and applied research in the areas of biotechnology and life sciences with 50 percent of those funds dedicated to the University of Missouri as an active partner with other agriculturally related life sciences efforts in the state. Priority research should include focus on Best Management Practices (BMPs) and value-added trait development and retention related to food, health and the environment.
- ✓ Direct MDA to create an infrastructure that links Missouri producers and users (or consumers).
- ✓ Identify and develop relationships with non-traditional agricultural products and industries – such as the equine industry and the forest products and timber industry – to support additional economic development and value expansion opportunities.
- ✓ Develop agritourism opportunities and work with the Department of Economic Development's (DED) Division of Tourism and private industry to highlight agriculture at each Missouri tourist information center. Efforts should focus on educating the agriculture community about opportunities for fostering agritourism, as well as creating interactive displays and informational and educational materials for the public.
- ✓ Expand international trade opportunities for agriculture production.

"I believe [state meat inspection] will be a big asset to the small producers across the state. It will open up new avenues for the farmers to market their animals, giving them a more competitive market, close to home where they can get a fair price for their animals." -- *Rick Forrest, meat processor*

"As we support the farmers, as we support agribusiness, it's got to be that unified effort ... We're not looking for giveaways; we're not looking for handouts. To answer the question, 'what is it going to take to be successful?' It's marketing, it's networking opportunities, it's support from the state to open doors that seem to be closed to those of us that are in marketing. And every single person involved in agriculture is involved in marketing in one way or another." -- *Steve Peirce, RIBUS, Inc.; Missouri Food Processors Association*

"For farmers selling to institutions like schools, food service requires knowledge of wholesale marketing, which sometimes means a lower price – a wholesale price rather than a retail price – in exchange for a larger, more diversified market. Thus, we are very interested in working with different farm organizations across the state to make farmers aware of new markets, like school food services and other institutions." -- *Ruth Anne Parrott, Outreach and Extension*

3. Increase access to capital for business creation and expansion.



An aerial view of the Macon ethanol plant.

During the late 80s and throughout the 1990s, Missouri began to offer incentives for investing in value-added agricultural enterprises. By the late 90s, Missouri (state government) had one of the most progressive state incentive systems in the nation, offering grants, loan guarantees, reduced interest on loans, and tax credits for business development.

Access to funding for new production tools, methods, infrastructure, land or processing opportunities is key to the success of many farms across our state. As farmers seek to

grow, become value enhancers, or pursue new opportunities, funds need to be readily available to help offset the inherent risk of these investments.

The following strategies are key to continued capital access in these areas:

- ✓ Develop, continue, expand and enhance producer and consumer incentive programs, such as incentives for animal agriculture, meat processing, ethanol, biodiesel, other bioenergy fuels, and renewable biomass products. Additionally, it is critical to:
 1. establish a long-term funding mechanism for new and future incentive programs; and
 2. measure the economic and environmental impact of all financial assistance programs.
- ✓ Continue funding the department's current value-added grant, loan guarantee, and tax credit programs at expanded levels by:
 1. increasing the loan guarantee from 25% to 50%;
 2. committing \$1 million to the Agriculture Product Utilization Contributor tax credit by July 1st of each year for use in grants program;
 3. maintain at least \$6 million in the new generation cooperative tax credit program each year; and
 4. enhance MISSOURI FIRST Linked Deposit Program.
- ✓ Evaluate whether loan guarantee programs are used to their full potential with maximum results. Program modifications and expansion should be considered if needed.

"Access to capital to bring innovative visions to fruition is the key to new agriculture in Missouri. While there are many programs available to the general business community, there is no specific capitalization fund for Missouri agriculture. If Missouri agriculture, and hence rural Missouri, is to prosper in the 21st century, then investment should be made in rural Missouri beyond the start-up stage with innovative capitalization methods that bring together public and private sources." -- *Joe Parcell, Outreach and Extension*

"The tax credit program that the State of Missouri put forward shows an incredible foresight. It gives producers incentive to put their dollars alongside someone else to bring that forward." -- *Bill Becker, Agrimarke Cooperative*

"Our organization owes a big debt of gratitude to the Missouri Department of Agriculture and their Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority value added grant." -- *Alan Fear, Greater Missouri Ostrich Association*

- ✓ Create a venture-capital fund for new and existing value-added industries (as allowed by the Missouri Constitution), modeled after Iowa and other state funds. Tobacco funds should be used to provide venture and rural development funding.
- ✓ Provide additional resources—or redirect existing resources—to meet the needs of Missouri agricultural entrepreneurs seeking technical assistance and capital.
- ✓ Develop and support policies that offer opportunities for beginning farmers to buy land and access capital – including linking retiring farmers with young and future farmers.
- ✓ Conduct a comprehensive review of statutes to include producer owned LLCs and LLPs as well as other such entities related to agricultural business structure to determine whether current law and incentive programs effectively satisfy modern business models and practices.

"I want to farm ... but I can't farm. My family has not farmed since the civil war. I have no land. I have no machinery. I have no capital. I went to a national beginning farmer and rancher meeting ... and I asked a board just like you, 'What do you tell a guy who comes right out of college who has a truck, a dog and a wife and wants to farm? What do you tell them?' All of their mouth's hit the floor. They could not answer my question ... " -- *Jason Scales, Ag Teacher*

4. Build organizational and communications infrastructure to better serve the needs of the ag community.

Historically, Americans have been attached to the land. Whether by tradition or necessity, much of American history is driven by agricultural production. Today that attachment is simply disappearing.

In agriculture, we often say the average farmer produces enough food to feed a certain number of people. While productivity is an issue of pride (as well as survival in many cases), it also represents a growing gap between the public and the food production system. As issues of food safety, animal rights, biotechnology and environmental stewardship surface in the state and national discussion, a public uninformed of the practices of agricultural production may be a dangerous adversary to modern production practices. As a result of this expanding chasm, it is imperative to the future of the industry to pursue all possible opportunities to educate the public. Additionally, MDA must work within the framework of state government and partnership with other agencies and organizations to maximize the impact of agriculture's message.

The following initiatives will support public understanding and recognition of the impact of agriculture:



Robert Holden learns about Missouri agriculture at AgCitement during the 2001 Missouri State Fair.

- ✓ Develop and fund creative, educational programs directed toward youth to increase knowledge about Missouri food quality, safety and origin, for example:
 1. Provide resources and input for a “Farm Walk” mobile educational unit for use in K-12 school visits;
 2. Expand the Jr. Master Gardener program;
 3. Expand access to the Show-Me Agriculture publication;
 4. Expand food gleaning and food recovery efforts; and
 5. Develop other in-school program opportunities.

- ✓ Propose legislation to generate revenue for agriculture education initiatives and existing agriculture education programs. Examples include an income tax contribution “check off” and the creation of “Ag Tag” license plates.

- ✓ Direct the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to support and encourage development of K through 12 curricula specific to agriculture.

- ✓ Recognize and support the contribution of all producers to the total economy, and encourage increased diversity of Missouri’s agricultural industry.

- ✓ Direct MDA to create, coordinate and maintain a web-based resource center.

- ✓ Encourage the governor and other state officials to speak on the significance of Missouri agriculture at every opportunity.

- ✓ Direct the MDA, Missouri Department of Health, DED, MDNR, MDC and Coordinating Board of Higher Education to develop a plan to increase public awareness and understanding of our state’s vital agricultural industry, to include issues of biosecurity and food safety.

“Even though our county is considered rural, we’re finding more and more people all the time that are not aware of and do not know agricultural information. People do not realize that the food that they eat, clothes they wear and the homes they live in all come from agriculture.” -- *Edith Elliott, family farmer, Wright Co. Farm Bureau education chair*

“We need an agriculture policy that encourages more small farms in Missouri, instead of fewer. Closer to city centers instead of farther away.” -- *Andy Ayers, owner and chef, Riddles Penultimate Grill and Wine Bar*

“Agriculture seems to me to be an industry that in some ways is victimized by its own success. I’m always amazed and impressed that it takes only two percent of our population directly involved in agriculture to feed the other 98 percent. The dilemma that poses is agricultural communities survival depends on the other 98 percent to make informed decisions – in the marketplace and in the voting booth. The disconnect grows with each generation.” -- *Cynthia Fauser, Outreach and Extension Nutrition Specialist*

Governor's Task Force on Agriculture Members

Ronnie Alewel

Ronnie is the executive secretary of the Missouri Association of Meat Processors, where she works with the departments of Agriculture and Conservation on issues that involve small Missouri meat processors. From 1964 to 1984, she handled the mail-order business for the family meat company, Alewel's Country Meats in Concordia. Ronnie has a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She and her husband, Roger, live in Sedalia, and manage a 40-cow herd of Braunvieh cattle in Johnson County.

David Blakemore

David has served as general manager of B&B Cotton Company since 1989. Before that, he was the manager of Sunny Side Grain Company. David, a resident of Campbell, attended Southeast Missouri State University. He has served in numerous offices for Ducks Unlimited and has been involved in a number of agricultural organizations, including the Cotton Producers of Missouri, the National Cotton Council, the Southern Cotton Ginners Association, Cotton Incorporated and the Missouri Cotton Growers Organization. He is a member of the Delta Center Advisory Board and has been active in the Rotary Club of Campbell.

Gina Bowman-Morrill

Gina joined Farmland Industries in 1980 and currently serves as the cooperative's director of government relations. Gina serves as a liaison between policy-makers and their farmer cooperative constituents by monitoring and lobbying on federal and state issues affecting the Farmland system. She was recognized in January 2000 by the Public Affairs Council and National Grassroots Conference for her efforts to increase understanding about the importance of trade to Farmland, its employees and farmer-owners. Gina has a bachelor's degree in public relations from William Jewell College. She is a native of Savannah, where she grew up on a farm.

Maida Coleman

Maida represents the 63rd district in the Missouri House of Representatives. Her interest in politics stems from a conversation she had in the late 1980s with now Missouri Supreme Court Judge Ronnie White. Since then, she has held a variety of positions for the Seventh Ward and currently serves as vice-chair of the 5th Senatorial District and the St. Louis City Democratic Central Committee. She has worked for the Secretary of State's Office, the St. Louis Housing Authority and the Girl Scout Councils of Missouri. A native of Sikeston, Maida graduated from Lincoln University with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

Cara Copenhaver

Cara is a student at the University of Missouri-Columbia majoring in agricultural journalism. She is an ambassador for the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources and also serves on the college's student council. She is a member of the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow and the National Agri-Marketing Association. She has had internships with Sosland Publishing Company in Kansas City, KFEQ Radio in St. Joseph and the Missouri Soybean Association. Cara was raised on a diversified livestock and crop farm near Lexington.

Don Copenhaver

Don Copenhaver has spent his entire career with MFA Incorporated and was named the organization's president and chief executive officer in 1998. At MFA, he has worked as an auditor, field accountant, manager of accounting, controller of the retail division, district manager and manager of retail operations. In 1980, Don was promoted to vice president of the Agri Services Division and then senior vice president, with the responsibility of directing operations of the company's retail facilities. He has an accounting degree from Quincy College in Quincy, Illinois. Don was raised on a farm near Clarence.

John Eggleston

John runs a grain farm operation with his wife and brother in Scotland County and is the president of Northeast Missouri Grain Processors, Inc. and NEMO Grain, L.L.C. He is a District II committeeman and serves as secretary of the Tri-County Electric Coop. John also serves on the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives and the Northeast Power G&T board of directors. He has also held positions with the Scotland County Farm Bureau, the Missouri Corn Growers Association, the Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, the U.S. Meat Export Federation Board and the National Pork Producers export advisory board. He has a bachelor's degree from Northeast Missouri State University.

Marvin Emerson

Marvin has served as president and chief executive officer of the Crystal Lake Fisheries family of companies since 1981. Marvin's parents bought the spring in Ava when he was two months old and developed it into Crystal Lake Fisheries, with the main focus to supply live rainbow trout for recreational fishing operations. Crystal Lake Fisheries has customers in about 35 states and delivers trout distances of more than 1,000 miles. Marvin is the past president and also a current officer of the U.S. Trout Farmers Association, past president of the Missouri Aquaculture Association and president of the Missouri Aquaculture Council. Marvin spent 28 years in the U.S. Army Reserves, retiring in January as a lieutenant colonel, field artillery.

Senator Bill Foster

Senator Bill Foster, a Republican, represents Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Stoddard and Wayne counties. He is chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation, Parks and Tourism committee. Prior to serving as a legislator, Sen. Foster owned the Brown Window Company, worked as an industrial engineer and served in the National Guard. He has been active in city government in Poplar Bluff, serving as councilman, mayor pro tem and mayor. He also was a member of the city's Planning and Zoning Committee, the Chamber of Commerce and the Poplar Bluff Industrial advisory committee. Sen. Foster has an associate degree in industrial management from the Milwaukee School of Engineering and attended the David Rankin Technical School.

Larry Harper

Larry Harper is one of those few escapees who defied the literary wisdom that you "can never go home." He returned to the farm and production agriculture after 36 years serving Missouri agriculture as a biased observer and journalist. After retiring as editor of the *Missouri Ruralist* magazine, Larry has become self-employed as a black walnut and agroforestry producer. He also works as a marketing and communications consultant. For the last 20 years, Larry has been establishing black walnut and pecan plantations on his family farm near Butler in Bates County. He also accepted the challenge to develop practical agroforestry systems that combine livestock grazing and cropping between the rows of nut trees. With his wife Melba, he has helped form a limited liability company with other nut producers to manage established plantations and manufacture nut-processing equipment necessary for an emerging crop enterprise.

Monte Hemenover, task force facilitator

Monte founded Avenues For Change, an agriculture consulting business, in May 1999 after working more than 16 years for Monsanto. Consumer-driven agriculture and its impact on the industry is Monte's specialty. He was born and raised on a cow-calf ranching operation in southeastern Wyoming, just north of Cheyenne. He graduated from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor's degree in ag economics and business.

Brooks Hurst

Brooks is a lifelong Atchison County resident and sixth-generation farmer from Tarkio, where he farms with his father and two brothers. He is the president of the Missouri Soybean Association, vice-president of the Atchison County Development Corporation, a member of the Atchison County Farm Bureau board and a member of the Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow. Brooks attended the University of Missouri-Columbia as a Curator's Scholar, earning a bachelor's degree in agriculture economics in 1988. He and his wife, Lydia, have two daughters, Alissa and Isabella. His wife manages the Flower Mill, a Tarkio flower and gift shop.

Senator Sidney Johnson

A lifelong farmer, Sen. Johnson has represented the 34th district in the Missouri Senate since 1990. He is a member of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation, Parks and Tourism committee. Sen. Johnson has served as the presiding commissioner of Buchanan County and on the board of directors of the Missouri Association of Counties. He is a past chairman of the Missouri Commissioners Association, past president of the Buchanan County Farm Bureau and past chairman of the Buchanan County Extension Council and Missouri Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee. Sen. Johnson has a bachelor's degree in Agriculture from the University of Missouri.

Sue Rourk King

Sue Rourk King is an assistant to the deputy administrator for commodity operations with the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Sue has been instrumental in guiding FSA's local food recovery and gleaning efforts. She also works to strengthen family farms and rural communities; expand direct markets for small, limited resource producers; educate consumers of the nutritional benefits of fresh produce and inform citizens of the importance of food gleaning and recovery. A graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in agricultural economics, Sue and her family live in Kansas City and own a cattle and grass farm in southwest Missouri.

Russ Kremer

Russ Kremer is a diversified farmer in Osage County and president of the Missouri Farmers Union. A summa cum laude graduate of the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Kremer is a past president of the Missouri Pork Producers Association. He also was an adult agriculture educator with one of the largest programs in the country. He was co-founder of Biomass Recovery Business and is involved in swine seed stock and natural pork production.

Charles Kruse

Charlie Kruse was elected president of the Missouri Farm Bureau and its five affiliated companies in 1992. Before joining Farm Bureau, he was the executive vice president of the North American Equipment Dealers Association. In 1985, Gov. John Ashcroft appointed him director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. He is the only person from Missouri to have served on President George Bush's Council on Rural America. Charlie retired from the National Guard in 1993 with the rank of brigadier general. A Dexter farmer, he has an agronomy degree from Arkansas State University and a master's degree in agronomy from the University of Missouri.

Representative Ken Legan

Ken Legan was elected to the House of Representatives in 1981 and was third in seniority among his fellow house members in the 91st general assembly. He is a member of the Agribusiness Committee and served as minority whip from 1983-85. Rep. Legan is a member of the Polk County Republican Central Committee, the Missouri Farm Bureau and the Missouri Cattlemen's Association. He farms in Halfway and was named commercial producer of the year by the Southwest Missouri Beef Cattle Improvement Association. Representative Legan served in the U.S. Army and is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in agriculture.

Jerry Lough

Jerry is the owner of two companies, Show-Me Forest Products, Inc. and CANOAK USA, located near Salem. The companies are part of a growing industry in south central Missouri that manages, harvests and processes oak and other timber to sell as wood flooring, graded lumber for cabinets and furniture, and lumber for pallets used in manufacturing and shipping, industrial lumber and other miscellaneous products. He is on the board of the Missouri Forest Producers Association. Jerry and his wife, Carolyn, manage a small cattle operation. They have two children.

Gary Mahnken

Gary, who has lived on a farm near Corder, Missouri, for all of his life says he has found this year to be a real challenge in agriculture and livestock production and feeding. Gary also has cattle in feedlots in Kansas and Nebraska, and is joined in the family farm operation by his two sons, a son-in-law and three grandsons. He is a charter member of the Lafayette County Cattlemen's Association and currently serves as president of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association. He has had the privilege of traveling to the White House to discuss agricultural issues. When he is not farming, Gary calls and teaches square dancing.

Jim McRoberts

Jim McRoberts is president of McRoberts Farm, Inc., a family farm corporation operating since 1862 with current facilities in northeast, central and southeast Missouri. Beef cattle, corn, soybeans and rice production are the corporation's main areas of concentration. Jim is a 1971 graduate of the University of Missouri and worked for First National Bank of Columbia before joining the family business in 1974. He is a member of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce, Columbia South Rotary and the University of Missouri Alumni Association.

Robert Meyer

Robert owns and operates a family farm in Bowling Green and is co-owner of Meyer Implement Company. He is a member of the Missouri Farmers Union board of directors and the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority.

Lowell Mohler

Gov. Bob Holden appointed Lowell Mohler director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture in January. Before joining the department, Lowell served as chairman of the Missouri State Fair Commission and worked for 26 years as chief administrator and corporate secretary of the Missouri Farm Bureau, retiring in 1996. Lowell has also served on the staff of the National Livestock and Meat Board in Chicago, was assistant director of marketing for the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, and served as marketing director for the Missouri Department of Agriculture from 1966-1970. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in agriculture. Lowell and his wife live on a 200-acre farm near Jefferson City where they raise corn, soybeans, sweet corn and asparagus.

Representative Peter C. Myers, Sr.

Representative Myers represents District 160 in the Missouri House, and is a member of the following committees: agriculture, appropriations – natural and economic resources; budget; education – elementary and secondary and environment and energy. He is president of Myers Land Management Company and serves as advisor to Adopt-a-Farm Family of America. He has served as chief of the Soil Conservation Service, assistant secretary of natural resources and environment and deputy secretary of agriculture for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. He is a former commissioner of the Missouri Department of Conservation. A native of Racine, Wisconsin, Rep. Myers has a degree in agriculture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Ed Nierman

Ed is a third generation dairy, corn and soybean farmer from Concordia. He serves as president of the Missouri Dairy Association and previously was on the board of directors of Mid-America Dairymen, Inc., a predecessor of Dairy Farmers of America. He also has served on the board of directors of the National Milk Producers Federation; Dairy Management, Inc.; American Dairy Association; and Midland Dairy Association. Ed has a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Daryl Oldvader

Daryl Oldvader is the fourth generation of a farm family and was raised on a grain and livestock farm near Brunswick. For 25 years, Daryl has served as the chief executive officer of the Farm Credit Services of Western Missouri, and in November 2001, was selected as chief executive office of all Missouri Farm Credit operations, except those located in the southeast Missouri district. He has also worked as a credit representative for the Federal Land Bank of St. Louis and as a branch manager for the Federal Land Bank Association of Lee's Summit. In 1990, the Springfield News Leader named Daryl one of 90 people most likely to impact southwest Missouri during the 90s. Daryl is a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in agriculture economics.

Thomas L. Payne

Tom Payne is vice chancellor and dean of the University of Missouri's College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, a position he has held since Jan. 1, 1999. Prior to joining the university, he served as associate vice president of agricultural administration, director of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center and associate dean for research for the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University. Dean Payne holds a master's degree and doctorate in entomology from the University of California, Riverside. He also has a bachelor's degree in zoology and an associate's degree in liberal arts. He is a member of numerous organizations and has received a number of honors and awards.

Representative Bill Ransdall

Representative Ransdall represents Pulaski County (District 148) in the Missouri House of Representatives where he currently serves as chairman of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee. In addition to his legislative duties, he is also a farmer and a businessman. Rep. Ransdall is a member of the following organizations: Masonic Lodge No. 375 AF and AM; Abou Ben Adhem; Scottish Rite; Association of U.S. Army; Sojourners; Committee of Fifty; Pulaski County Democratic Club; Missouri Cattlemen's Association; Farm Bureau; Ducks Unlimited; the Wild Turkey Federation; and the United Methodist Church. He was elected to the Waynesville City Council in 1978, serving as mayor and mayor pro tem. In 1993, Rep. Ransdall chaired the committee to select U.S. Marshals and U.S. Attorneys. He was awarded the Outstanding Civilian award with Medal by Department of the Army. A graduate of Moler Barber School, Rep. Ransdall also attended the University of Missouri-Rolla. He and his wife, Patricia, have two daughters and three grandchildren. Rep. Ransdall was named to the task force in August following the death of Rep. Gary Wiggins.

Julie Ridlon

In addition to being a personal chef, caterer, culinary teacher, consultant and mycofogist, Julie is the founder and market master of the Clayton Farmers' Market. She is also the founder and chair of the Missouri Chef's Collaborative and originator of the St. Patrick's Center "Second Helpings" program. Julie chaired the St. Louis Culinary Society in 1998 and 2001. She has also served as the chair of Incurable Epicureans, was a participant in the James Beard Picnic and started a farm camp through the Center of Contemporary Arts. The mother of three teen-age sons, Julie is an ardent supporter of small, local farmers growing great Missouri products.

William L. Riggins

Bill Riggins owns Riggins R-CO, Inc., a fertilizer, chemical and custom application equipment sales and service operation. He is also chairman of Mo-Ag Industries Council. He has worked for Elanco, a division of Eli Lilly and Company and Baker Agri-Sales in Sedalia. He helped to start Brunswick Agri-Services, a retail fertilizer, chemical and custom application operation, and sold his interest to his two partners in 1988. Bill is a native of rural Gentry County and lived on a farm all of his life. He served in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969 and graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1973 with a degree in agriculture mechanization.

Brent Rockhold

Brent and his wife, Teresa, own and operate a family farm in Scotland County near Arbela, where they raise approximately 1,200 acres of corn and soybeans. They also have 100 acres of hay and a 70-head beef cow operation. Brent performs custom grain hauling and harvesting. He is chairman of the Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, on the board of the Missouri Corn Grower's Association and is a member of the National Corn Growers' public policy action team. Brent is a long-time member and current vice president of the Scotland County Corn Growers Association and is past president of the Scotland County Cattlemen's Association. Brent also has worked 10 years as a high school basketball official.

Jim Russell

Jim, a lifelong Missourian, has been a farmer, businessman, legislator and advocate of Missouri agriculture. He is president of Missouri Agricultural Industries Council, an agribusiness trade organization. For the past 18 years, Jim has represented the interests of Missouri agribusinesses in the hallways of the state Capitol. He served four terms in the Missouri House of Representatives and was the first chairman of the House commerce committee, earning the Top Ten Legislators Award from the Capitol Press Corps in 1982. Jim's education has ranged from a one-room schoolhouse to the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he earned a bachelor's and master's degree in agriculture. He was the university's 1999 Agriculture Alumnus of the Year and serves on the Legislative Information Network Committee.

Brent Sandidge

Brent Sandidge is the manager of Ham Hill Farms Inc., a family corporation that farms 3,700 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat and has a 2,000+ sow, farrow-to-finish hog operation near Marshall. Brent is the president and past treasurer of the Missouri Pork Producers Association and has chaired the association's government and public relations committee. Brent has served on the board of directors for the Marshall Chamber of Commerce and the advisory board of the Marshall Saline Development Corporation. He is a 1978 graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia with a bachelor's degree in animal science. He and his wife, Connie, have two children.

Representative Wes Shoemyer

Rep. Wes Shoemyer was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in November 2000 and represents the counties of Audrain, Lincoln, Monroe, Pike, Ralls and Shelby. He is vice-chair of the agriculture committee. Rep. Shoemyer owns and operates a family farm in Monroe County. He is a member of the National Farmers Organization, the Missouri Farmers Union, the Institute for Rural America, the Monroe County Farm Bureau, the Northeast Missouri Grain Processors, the Shelbina Lodge 228 AF & AM and the Monroe County Democratic Club. He attended the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Dana Staley

Dana has been active in FFA since high school, ultimately serving as the 2000-2001 state FFA president. She has been busy traveling across the state speaking to FFA members and attending leadership camps. A 2000 graduate of King City High School, Dana attends the University of Missouri-Columbia, where she is majoring in agriculture economics. In high school, Dana was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, National Honor Society and 4-H. Dana lives on a farm in northwest Missouri, where her family raises cattle, corn and soybeans.

Carol Starbuck

Carol is active in the Northeast Missouri Sheep Producers organization and is serving her fifth year on the board of directors of the Missouri Sheep Producers Association. Carol also serves as the state wool promotion chair. She has taught math for several years and is currently a psychological examiner for the Kirksville School District. Carol grew up on a farm in northeast Missouri, where her parents raised livestock for 50 years. Carol and her family returned to the farm in 1978 and began raising Hereford cattle and Corriedale and Columbia sheep. She has been a 4-H leader for many years.

Don Steen

Don Steen is a turkey farmer in Eldon, Missouri. In addition to the 60,000 turkeys he raises a year, Don also runs a 70-head beef cow operation. A former state representative, Don represented the 115th district in the Missouri House from 1990 to 1998. He is a member of the Miller County Farm Bureau Board and chair of the Missouri Farm Bureau Poultry Commodity Committee. He also serves on the American Farm Bureau's National Poultry Advisory Committee and is on the board of the University of Missouri Ag Alumni Association. Don has a bachelor's degree in animal husbandry from the university. In his spare time, he participates in a contemporary Christian music group.

Richard W. Stegmann

Rich has served as president of Lange-Stegmann Fertilizer Company in St. Louis since 1960. The company produces fertilizers for agriculture, industrial, professional turf and consumer products. The company also operates a barge, rail and truck terminal on the Mississippi River at St. Louis. Rich is past chairman of Mo-Ag Industries and past president of the St. Louis Agribusiness Club. He is a member of the Fertilizer Institute, the Agricultural Retailers Association, Merchants and Manufacturing, the Northside Businessmen Association and the Missouri Farm Bureau. Rich says he was educated in the school of hard knocks and experience.

William C. Stringer

Bill served on the faculty of the University of Missouri-Columbia for 40 years before retiring to Rocheport, Missouri and his beef farm. At the university, he was professor and assistant professor of animal science and food science, department chair and unit leader of food science and engineering and associate dean for academic programs. He served four months as interim dean for the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources. Bill has conducted research on meat processing and distribution and taught meat science and food science courses. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Georgia and a doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Morris Westfall

A livestock farmer, State Senator Morris Westfall has served the 28th district since 1994. He is chairman of the Senate transportation and civil and criminal jurisprudence committees, and a member of the appropriations and education committees. He was a state representative from 1972 to 1980, and headed the Missouri Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, now the Farm Services Agency, from 1981 to 1993. Sen. Westfall, who resides in Halfway, has a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

In Memoriam ...



Representative Gary Wiggins

Representative Gary Wiggins, a Democrat, represented Macon County and parts of Chariton, Linn and Sullivan counties (District 8) in the Missouri House of Representatives. In addition to his legislative duties, he was a farmer. Rep. Wiggins formerly worked as a quality control supervisor for ConAgra, as the director of quality control for L.T. York Company and as a math and science instructor with the New Cambria school district. He was a member of the MFA Oil advisory board. Rep. Wiggins was a graduate of Northeast Missouri State University, where he majored in biology.

**One Missouri, One Agriculture
Task Force Advisors:**

Greg Branum, USDA Rural Development
John Bryan, The Poultry Federation
Gene Danekas, National Agriculture Statistics Service
Dave Drennan, Missouri Dairy Association
Joe Francka, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industries
Brian Griffith, MFA, Inc.
Deanne Hackman, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Ag Innovation Center
Daryl Hobbs, University of Missouri, Office of Social & Economic Data Analysis
Leslie Holloway, Missouri Farm Bureau Federation
David Hopson, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health
Tim Kelley, Farm Service Agency
Dale Ludwig, Missouri Soybean Association
Jo Manhart, The Missouri Egg Council
Gary Marshall, Missouri Corn Growers Association
Bob Miller, Missouri Department of Conservation
Don Nikodim, Missouri Pork Producers Association
Rex Ricketts, University of Missouri, Commercial Ag
Steve Taylor, Missouri Beef Industry Council
Scott Totten, Department of Natural Resources
Wayne Yokley, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Division of Market Development
Bob Young, University of Missouri, FAPRI

**One Missouri, One Agriculture Task Force on Agriculture
2001 Field Hearings**

July 10 – St. Joseph, Holiday Inn Downtown

July 11 – Kirksville, Days Inn

July 17 – Springfield, Bass Pro Shop

July 18 – Portageville, University of Missouri, Lee Farm

August 1 – St. Louis, Holiday Inn Riverport

August 13 – Sedalia, State Fair Community College



One Missouri

One Agriculture

Governor's Task Force on Agriculture 2001

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